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Security Council

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Letter dated 6 December 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Romania to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to enclose the assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Romania in October 2005 (see annex). This assessment was prepared under my own responsibility following consultations with other members of the Council.

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mihnea **Motoc**
Ambassador

* Reissued for technical reasons.

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Annex to the letter dated 6 December 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Romania to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Romania (October 2005)

Introduction

During the month of October 2005, under the presidency of Romania, the Security Council held 25 public meetings, including a ministerial meeting, an open debate and 3 private meetings. A total of 20 consultations of the whole were also held.

The Council was seized with 11 reports, including the report on the comprehensive review of the situation in Kosovo (Serbia and Montenegro), the report of the International Independent Investigation Commission established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1595 (2005), the second semi-annual report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on the implementation of resolution 1559 (2004), and the report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security.

The Council adopted seven resolutions: on the situation in Somalia; the cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security; the situation in Côte d'Ivoire (2); the situation in Western Sahara; the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and the situation in the Middle East.

The Security Council issued nine presidential statements: on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts (2); the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; the situation in Eritrea and Ethiopia; the situation in the Sudan; the situation in Côte d'Ivoire; the situation in Haiti; the situation in Kosovo (Serbia and Montenegro); and on women and peace and security. The President also made three statements to the press on behalf of the Council.

In addition, the President of the Council exchanged a number of letters with the Secretary-General, including with regard to the Security Council mission to Central Africa.

The President of the Council issued two notes: on the chairmanship of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa; and on the chairmanship of the Working Group of the Security Council on Children and Armed Conflict.

On 4 October, the President briefed the press on the programme of work of the Council for the month. The President participated in the seventh annual meeting of the heads of the principal organs of the United Nations. He also met the President of the General Assembly to exchange views on the work of the two bodies.

Through its website (www.un.int/romania), the presidency provided information on the activities of the Council.

Africa

Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 4 October, the Security Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2005/46), expressing its concern over the presence of foreign armed groups which continue to pose a serious threat to stability in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and demanding that the Forces démocratiques pour la libération du Rwanda proceed voluntarily with their disarmament and return to Rwanda without delay or preconditions. Moreover, the Council noted with concern the incursion of members of the Lord's Resistance Army into the Democratic Republic of the Congo and welcomed the intention of the Congolese armed forces to disarm this group in cooperation with the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and in accordance with its mandate as set out in resolution 1565 (2004).

On 28 October, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1635 (2005), by which it extended the mandate of MONUC until 30 September 2006 and authorized an increase of 300 personnel in the military strength of MONUC to allow for the deployment of an infantry battalion in Katanga.

Eritrea and Ethiopia

On 4 October, the Security Council held emergency consultations concerning the situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia. The Secretary-General participated in the meeting, informing the Council on the decision of the Government of Eritrea to ban all types of helicopter flights operated by the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) within the Eritrean airspace.

On the same day, at a formal meeting, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2005/47) expressing its grave concern at the decision of the Government of Eritrea and calling for its immediate reversal.

On 19 October, in informal consultations, the Council members were briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, on the consequences of Eritrea's decision. The members of the Council once again called upon Eritrea to lift all restrictions imposed on UNMEE.

The same day, the Council held a private meeting with the countries contributing troops to UNMEE. The Council and the troop contributors heard a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations. The troop contributors expressed their concern at the deteriorating security environment and called upon the Security Council to take appropriate measures to avoid a possible escalation of the situation.

On 21 October, in informal consultations, the Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Margareta Wahlström, briefed Council members on the humanitarian situation in Eritrea. She stressed that food insecurity remained the main humanitarian concern in Eritrea, where 60 per cent of the population depended on international assistance.

The same day, the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations held a meeting with major troop-contributing countries to UNMEE. The presidency of the Council informed about its meetings with the Chargés d'affaires of

Ethiopia and Eritrea on 19 and 20 October, respectively. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations provided a briefing on the relocation process of the troops due to the increasing insecurity. The troop-contributing countries stressed the need for close dialogue with the Council.

On 26 October, the Council heard a briefing by the Director of the Africa Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on the latest developments in Eritrea and Ethiopia. He reported that no improvements had been registered. The Permanent Representative of Japan, in his capacity as Chairman of the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations, briefed the Council on the results of the meeting of the Working Group held on 21 October. Greece introduced a draft resolution regarding the situation in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Sudan

On 10 October, in consultations, members of the Security Council were briefed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hédi Annabi, on the political, humanitarian and security situation in Darfur. The Assistant Secretary-General informed the Security Council that while substantive negotiations among the parties to the conflict had started in Abuja, under the mediation of the African Union, the security situation in the field had deteriorated. The Council members strongly condemned the upsurge of violence in Darfur, which had resulted in the killing of four peacekeepers and two civilian contractors affiliated with the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS), and in the detention of other AMIS personnel.

On 13 October, at a formal meeting, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2005/48) firmly condemning the attacks perpetrated by Government troops and rebel groups against AMIS personnel, civilians and internally displaced persons in Darfur. It also called upon the Government and the rebel movements to take immediate steps to stabilize the situation in Darfur and to resort to dialogue and negotiations in Abuja with a view to reaching a political settlement.

Somalia

On 4 October, in consultations, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Ibrahim Gambari, informed the Security Council of the latest developments in Somalia. According to the Under-Secretary-General, divisive issues remained within the Transitional Federal Institutions, while the failure by the parties to engage in dialogue had led to tensions and a military build-up. The members of the Security Council called on all parties to refrain from making military preparations and to commit themselves to the peaceful resolution of their differences through inclusive dialogue.

On 14 October, in informal consultations, the Council members heard a briefing by the Permanent Representative of the Philippines, in his capacity as Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 751 (1992), on the latest activities of the Committee, and the latest report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia (S/2005/625). Following consultations, during a formal meeting, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1630 (2005), in which it requested the Secretary-General to re-establish the Monitoring Group for a period of six months.

Côte d'Ivoire

On 13 October, during a public meeting, the Security Council heard briefings by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nigeria and Chairman of the African Union Executive Council, Oluyemi Adeniji; the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, Said Djinnit; the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire, Pierre Schori; and the High Representative of the Secretary-General for the elections in Côte d'Ivoire, António Monteiro, on the evolution of the situation in Côte d'Ivoire, given the impossibility of holding presidential elections as scheduled, on 30 October 2005. The Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire also made a statement.

The meeting occasioned the presentation of the decision taken during the summit of the African Union Peace and Security Council held in Addis Ababa on 6 October 2005, which set out the arrangements for a transition period of maximum 12 months leading up to the organization of free, fair and transparent elections.

According to the AU Commissioner, the parties should strictly comply with their commitments and obligations and the international community should show greater determination in exercising the necessary pressure and leverage on defaulting parties. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nigeria referred to the request of the African Union to the Security Council to provide the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire with all necessary means to enable it to discharge its mandate and to consider a substantial increase in its strength.

In providing an update on the situation on the ground, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General pointed out that the post-30 October arrangements would need a realistic time-bound schedule for implementing the road map set by the Pretoria Agreement and Declaration. He also said that the work of the monitoring and mediation mechanisms established by the AU Peace and Security Council should be linked explicitly to the application of targeted sanctions. The High Representative of the Secretary-General made a presentation on the efforts he had deployed in Côte d'Ivoire and the challenges connected with the electoral process.

The public meeting was immediately followed by a private one, which occasioned an exchange of views between the Council members and the invitees.

On 14 October, the Security Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2005/49), by which it endorsed the decision of the AU Peace and Security Council of 6 October 2005 (see S/2005/639) and expressed its intention to rapidly take all necessary measures to support its implementation as appropriate.

On 21 October, the Security Council adopted resolution 1633 (2005), in which it endorsed the decision of the AU Peace and Security Council regarding the arrangements for the post-30 October transition period.

On 18 October, the Security Council adopted resolution 1632 (2005) by which it extended to 15 December 2005 the mandate of the Group of Experts created on the basis of resolution 1584 (2005), with the view to monitor the implementation of the arms embargo.

Liberia

On 14 October, in informal consultations, the Director of the Africa Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations briefed the Council on the first round of presidential and legislative elections held in Liberia on 11 October.

A press statement was issued on that occasion, in which the Security Council welcomed the holding of the elections in a peaceful and orderly manner, commended the Liberian people for their political maturity and called upon all participants to maintain their commitment to non-violence and the democratic process throughout the electoral period.

Western Sahara

On 24 October, in consultations, the Director of the Asia and Middle East Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations presented the Secretary-General's latest progress report on the situation concerning Western Sahara (S/2005/648). She assessed that, during the reporting period, there had been no progress between the parties with regard to a settlement and that the situation was likely to deteriorate further in the absence of a mutually acceptable solution. On the same day, the members of the Council held a meeting with countries contributing troops to the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO).

On 28 October, in a formal meeting, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1634 (2005), by which it extended for a period of six months the mandate of MINURSO and requested the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy for Western Sahara, Peter van Walsum, to provide a briefing on the progress of his activities within three months.

Other matters

On 4 October, in informal consultations and under "Other matters", the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs provided an update to the Council's discussion of 27 July (the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on human settlements issues in Zimbabwe, Anna Tibaijuka, provided a briefing in a private meeting) in connection with the item entitled "Letters dated 26 July 2005 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council" (S/2005/485 and S/2005/489).

Americas

Haiti

On 18 October, in an open briefing, the Prime Minister of Haiti, Gérard Latortue, addressed the Council on the latest developments in Haiti. The open briefing was followed by informal consultations, during which the Council members were briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Juan Gabriel Valdés, on the Secretary-General's latest report (S/2005/631), recent developments in Haiti and the latest activities of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). Following consultations, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2005/50), in which it stressed the primary importance of

ensuring that Haiti benefits from transparent, inclusive, free and fair elections, and underlining that all efforts should be undertaken to ensure that the democratically elected authorities take office on 7 February 2006, in accordance with the Haitian Constitution.

Middle East

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

On 20 October, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs briefed the Security Council on the latest developments regarding the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. In his briefing, he stressed the need for energetic coordination, cooperation and engagement by Israelis, Palestinians and the international community in order to translate the disengagement from Gaza into a sustained and negotiated peace. The number of violent incidents that had occurred during the reporting period showed once again the potential for deteriorating security to derail the political process. While the disengagement had not yet revived the peace process, the current context was a basis and opportunity to do so through the completion of the agenda laid out by the Quartet and by renewed and broader dialogue between the Israeli and Palestinian Governments.

Lebanon

On 24 October 2005, in an open briefing, the head of the International Independent Investigation Commission established pursuant to resolution 1595 (2005), Detlev Mehlis, introduced to the Security Council the report of the Commission (S/2005/662), which is assisting the Lebanese authorities in their investigation of the bombing on 14 February 2005 that killed former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and 22 others. He noted that, on the basis of the evidence collected, the Commission had identified certain main lines of investigation and had established certain leads. He emphasized that, given the complexity of the case, the investigation could not be considered complete and that more time should be allotted to further pursue the Commission's findings and follow up emerging leads. Commissioner Mehlis invited the authorities of the Syrian Arab Republic to carry out their own investigation into the killing in an open and transparent manner. Following the introduction of the report, the representatives of Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic made statements.

The representative of Lebanon stated that the Lebanese people were united in condemning the crime and were backing the Council's efforts to reveal all aspects of it and help to bring the murderers to justice, whoever and wherever they were. He pledged Lebanon's continued cooperation with the Commission and called upon all concerned parties to do the same.

The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic said that finding the perpetrators of the attack that had killed Rafik Hariri was extremely important to his country, since that crime had targeted not only Lebanon but also Syrian accomplishments in the region, namely the pacification of Lebanon. Countering the notion that the report had substantially implicated Syrian involvement, he said the report had been clearly influenced by the political climate prevailing in Lebanon after the assassination. He rejected the report's charges that the Syrian Arab

Republic had not sufficiently cooperated with the investigation and detailed his Government's efforts to work with the Commission.

The open briefing was followed by consultations of the whole. Proceeding on the basis of the report of the Commission, France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America introduced a draft resolution. Council members discussed the draft resolution in subsequent consultations, which were held on 26 and 28 October.

On 31 October, at a meeting convened at the ministerial level under the presidency of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Romania, Mihai-Razvan Ungureanu, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1636 (2005). In the resolution, the Council called for the Syrian Arab Republic to cooperate fully and unconditionally with the Commission and insisted that it not interfere in the affairs of Lebanon. The Council also decided that all individuals suspected by the Commission or the Government of Lebanon of involvement in planning, sponsoring, organizing or perpetrating the murder be subject to travel restrictions and freezing of financial assets. The Council defined the crime as a terrorist act and stipulated that the involvement of any State in that crime would constitute a serious violation of that country's obligations to prevent and refrain from supporting terrorism in accordance with previous resolutions. The Council requested the Commission to report to it by 15 December on the investigation's progress, including on the cooperation of the Syrian Arab Republic, so that the Council could consider further action.

Council members (11 of whom were represented at the level of Foreign Ministers) made explanations of vote. The representatives of Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic also made statements.

Iraq

On 17 October, in a statement to the press read by the President of the Security Council, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Romania, the Security Council welcomed the Iraqi referendum conducted on 15 October as an important step in the political process endorsed by Security Council resolution 1546 (2004).

On 19 October, in consultations, the Assistant Secretary-General for Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts, and Controller, Warren Sachs, informed the Security Council of the proposed arrangements for terminating the operations relating to the letters of credit raised against the United Nations Iraq Account.

Europe

Kosovo (Serbia and Montenegro)

On 24 October, at a public meeting, the Council heard briefings by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the comprehensive review of the situation in Kosovo, Kai Eide, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), Søren Jessen-Petersen. The Prime Minister of Serbia, Vojislav Kostunica, addressed the meeting on behalf of Serbia and Montenegro. He emphasized that any solution for the issue of Kosovo must respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of

Serbia and Montenegro as an internationally recognized State, a Member of the United Nations and member of other international organizations. On the same day, following informal consultations, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2005/51), in which it welcomed the report prepared by the Special Envoy, containing a comprehensive review of the implementation of standards, as well as of the overall situation in and relating to Kosovo (S/2005/635). The Council stressed that further, more sustained progress was required and that the implementation of standards in Kosovo must continue with undiminished energy and a stronger sense of commitment. The Council reaffirmed its full support for the Special Representative and UNMIK in their continuing work to support the implementation of standards, and stated that their implementation must continue during the future status process and would be an important factor in determining the degree of progress.

The Council supported the Secretary-General's intention to start a political process to determine Kosovo's future status, as foreseen in resolution 1244 (1999). It also reaffirmed the framework of the resolution and welcomed the Secretary-General's readiness to appoint a Special Envoy to lead the future status process.

Georgia

On 28 October, in informal consultations, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Georgia, Heidi Tagliavini, presented the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) (S/2005/657). The Special Representative stressed that a high-level reconfirmation of the parties' commitments to the non-resumption of hostilities and to the safe and dignified return of internally displaced persons and refugees could reinvigorate the peace process. While reporting limited progress in the fields of security guarantees, infrastructure rehabilitation and the registration of returnees, the Special Representative stressed that both sides need to refrain from actions or statements that are detrimental to the re-emerging opportunities for pragmatic progress in the peace process. In this regard, it was mentioned that the Georgian side should address the Abkhaz security concerns, and the Abkhaz side should honour its previous commitments, to respect the rights of the displaced population and meet the practical and security concerns of the returnees and local residents in the Gali district.

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

On 4 October, following consultations, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2005/45) in which it unequivocally condemned the terrorist attacks in Bali, Indonesia, on 1 October. The Council also reaffirmed that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations constituted one of the most serious threats to international peace and security and that any acts of terrorism were criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation, whenever and by whomsoever committed.

On 31 October, following consultations, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2005/53) in which it strongly condemned the series of bomb attacks that occurred in New Delhi on 29 October.

On 26 October, in a public meeting, the Council was briefed by the Chairmen of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities, the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism, and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) on the activities undertaken and programmes of work of their respective committees.

The Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) informed the Council that the Committee had considered in great detail the third report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team (S/2005/572) and had also begun the consideration of the revised draft guidelines for the conduct of the Committee's activity.

The Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) stated that the Committee had focused, inter alia, on catching up on the backlog of reports from States; continuing to explore ways to improve the facilitation of technical assistance; paying visits to States; and enhancing dialogue and cooperation with international, regional and subregional organizations.

The Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) stated that the main task of the Committee had been the examination of national reports submitted by States and the identification of offers of and requests for assistance. The Chairman said that, in the coming months, the Committee would continue to examine further reports and act as a clearing house on the issue of assistance, and would also carry on its outreach activities.

Thematic issues

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security

On 17 October, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1631 (2005) on cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security. In the resolution, the first on this subject, the Council set up a framework for enhanced dialogue and cooperation between the Security Council and regional organizations in maintaining peace and security, primarily through regular meetings and better communication at all levels and reports of the Secretary-General, and invited Member States to contribute to the strengthening of the capacity of regional organizations.

The adoption of resolution 1631 (2005) followed an extensive discussion on strengthening the cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in the maintenance of peace and security. The Council's thematic debate was chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Romania. The Secretary-General made a statement. High-level representatives of 10 regional and subregional organizations (African Union Commission; Association of Southeast Asian Nations; Commonwealth of Independent States; Council of Europe; European Union; League of Arab States; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Organization of American States; Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe; and South-East Europe Cooperation Process) participated in the debate.

Women and peace and security

On 27 October, the Council held an open debate on women and peace and security to mark the fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). The Deputy Secretary-General opened the debate and underlined the fact that five years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), women still had not won the place they deserved. She called on Governments to redouble their efforts to bring women into the political and development processes. The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations gave examples of progress in the protection of women and in their involvement in peacekeeping in Liberia, Burundi, Timor-Leste, Kosovo (Serbia and Montenegro), Afghanistan and Côte d'Ivoire. More than 40 speakers participated in the debate — including high-level officials of the United Nations, members of the Security Council and other Member States, and representatives of civic groups. On 25 October, Denmark organized an Arria formula meeting to mark the fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000).

In a presidential statement (S/PRST/2005/52) adopted after the debate, the Security Council reaffirmed its commitment to resolution 1325 (2000), while urging Member States, regional and subregional organizations and the United Nations system to enhance the role of women in decision-making with regard to all peace processes, post-conflict reconstruction and the rebuilding of societies.